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GRT

JAMMU AND KASHMIR A WHEEL OF STATE /REGIONAL PARTIES : AN OVERVIEW BY THE ELECTIONS.



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ABSTRACT

Political parties are indispensable to any democratic system. The constitution of India has provided for representative and federal form with the parliamentary democratic government both at the union and in the states. Democratic representative government cannot function without political parties. Political parties formulate, consolidate and express public opinion. They simplify the election process; enlighten the people on political issues and their responsibilities. They act as a link between the government and common people. Political system is inevitable for existence of a democratic system. Political parties are the social factors that enlighten, represent and protect the people in a representative democracy. The political parties have certain peculiarities, like organizational structure, stability, definite objectives on the basis of ideas and principles, firm stand on public issues ultimate

objective of acquiring political power in the governance of the country or state.

The Jammu and Kashmir politics is wholly dominated by the regional parties. The National parties are not able to form the government without the help of regional parties. The present paper highlights the role of Political parties during the militancy period in 1990. And also highlights the role of political parties



in 2002 assembly elections which was the land mark in the history of Jammu and Kashmir politics.

KEYWORDS :Democratic , Political parties , Political system .

INTRODUCTION :

The Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a very deep rooted political crisis after 1987 assembly elections. In 1989 the militancy disturbed the political parties collapsed and mass of Kashmir's came out on the streets demanding AZADI in January 1990, the legislative Assembly was suspended and the

state was brought under the Governor rule. This was followed by the president's Rule for the long years thereafter; the state had a political vacuum. All political activities were sidelined and political activities were overthrown by the fear of gun. How militancy the situation of terror and violence could undermine the political process in the valley of Kashmir became clear during the parliamentary election of 1989. In the absence of any normal political activity the whole electoral exercise proved to be of a farcical nature. While the MUF boycotted the elections, various militant organizations directed the people not to participate in the electoral exercise forming the wrath of the militants most of the opposition parties postponed, themselves from filling the nomination papers of their candidates. National conference, finding no competitors in the valley of Kashmir, could win all all the three seats. While Srinagar parliamentary constituency was returned uncontested, in the rest of the two constituencies of Baramullah and Anantnag challenge to NC came only from the Independent candidates. In these two constituencies very few people exercised their votes

The situation however had undergone some change by the time the 1996 parliamentary election took place. By 1995, a sense of exhaustion had overcome Kashmir and the urge for peace the initiation of electoral process was not unproblematic. Firstly, the National Conference, the major regional party in the valley had boycott the election. Seeking to reclaim its political constituency in the valley, it had raised the issue of autonomy and had asked for definite assurance from the central government that the special constitutional status as guaranteed to the state before 1953 would be restored. Failing to get such an assurance, it had decided not participate in the elections. There was no problem of violence and fear that overtaken the valley during the last six years. Though the parliamentary election that was held in May 1996 that year was the first political exercise that the state had undertaken since the breakdown of the order, the voter turnout in the valley was quite substantial.

In September the same year, the Assembly elections took place. Like the parliamentary elections took place. Like the parliamentary elections, in 1996 Assembly election was quite controversial. With strong presence of militants, there was no possibility of holding the election without the presence of security forces. For holding elections; state also took the help of the "renegades" or the surrendered militants. Like the parliamentary elections one of the major allegations about the Assembly election was that the voters were forced by the security forces to cast their vote

The voter turnout in 1996 Assembly elections was not as high as earlier elections, but it was reasonable, given the extraordinary circumstances in which the state was placed. The state average of voting was 53.92 %. Certainly in the context of earlier elections, the voter turnout was quite low because the Assembly elections had recorded voter turnout of 74.66 percent Similarly in 1983 also, the voter turnout was 73.24%. However, seen in the context of violence, the overall voter turnout was quite substantial

The National conference emerged as the dominant party in the legislative Assembly bagging as many as 57 of a total of 87 seats. The rest of the seats were dispersed between BJP (8 Seats) congress (7 seats) Janata Dal (5 seats) BSP (4 seats) Panthers, CPM, won one seat respectively. On two seats the independent registered their victory.

2002 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The 2002 Assembly election is considered to be very significant in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. Much before the elections Atal Bihar Vajpayee, then the prime minister of India, heading the NDA government had made a public pronouncement committing a "free and fair" election. At the first time of J and K state got the attention of international community. The entire world was watching keenly how the people of J and K will response to it. Centre was also too much interested in it and tried

to bring the Hurriyat Conference to the electoral arena, though the Kashmir Committee for the first time, the voters in J and K had identified themselves through the identity cards. Though the Hurriyat assured the people to boycott the elections, but it did not affect the elections at all.

The assembly elections 2002 also proved to be historic in a different context it was much more competitive than any election before. For the first time in electoral history of the state the real and intense party competition was held. More specially, the valley of Kashmir that witnessed more fierce competition between the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic party that occurred in 1998.

The result of the election of 2002 was a landmark in the history of Kashmir. The soft and fair election was held and the result was the winning PDP party. Mufti Mohammad Syed became the C.M. of state.

In conclusion we can say that whole elections and political situation, ups and downs of J and K in a brief. The people tried to show the role of different regional parties in the mass mobilization during election and how the participation of people increased because of the role of regional parties. Thus we can say that Jammu and Kashmir politics is whole dominated by the regional parties and no National parties is able to form the government without the help of regional parties in the Jammu and Kashmir politics.

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